

News Release

U.S. Department of Justice

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Gregory A. White, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Ohio, today announced that a federal grand jury in Cleveland returned a superseding indictment in the pending terrorism case against Mohammad Zaki Amawi, Marwan Othman El-Hindi, and Wassim I. Mazloun, charging two additional defendants, Zubair A. Ahmed and his cousin, Khaleel Ahmed, both of Chicago, Illinois, with conspiring to commit terrorist acts against Americans overseas. Amawi, El-Hindi and Mazloun are also jointly charged in the superseding indictment with conspiring to provide material support to terrorists, and each is also charged individually with additional offenses, including making threats against the President (Amawi), distributing information regarding explosives (Amawi and El-Hindi), and making and using false documents (El-Hindi).

U.S. Attorney White also announced that two additional indictments were returned by the federal grand jury, related to the terrorism case, including a single count indictment charging Bilal Mazloun, the brother of defendant Wassim I. Mazloun, with making a false statement to federal agents during the investigation of the terrorism case. In addition, a separate, seven-count, indictment was returned charging El-Hindi and Ashraf Zaim, (aka Ashraf Alzaim), with conspiracy to defraud the Internal Revenue Service and The U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, theft of government funds, and wire fraud, all relative to a \$40,000 federal grant they received in 2002.

Amawi, age 27, last resided in Toledo, Ohio before traveling to Jordan in August 2005; El-Hindi, age 42, also resided in Toledo, Ohio; and Mazloun, age 24, resided in Sylvania, Ohio. All three are being detained pending the trial in the case. Zubair A. Ahmed, age 27, resides at 3504 Green Bay Road, Apartment 309C, North Chicago, Illinois, and his cousin, Khaleel Ahmed, age 26, resides at 4501 N. Keystone Avenue, Chicago, Illinois. Both are U.S. citizens. Bilal Mazloun, age 22, a naturalized U.S. citizen, last resided at 5526 Grey Drive, Sylvania, Ohio. Zaim, age 39, also a U.S. citizen, resides at 2515 Manchester Boulevard, Ottawa Hills, Ohio.

The superseding indictment charges Amawi, El-Hindi, Wassim I. Mazloun, Zubair A. Ahmed and Khaleel Ahmed, with conspiring, together and with others, to "kill, kidnap or maim persons outside of the United States, to include U.S. military personnel serving in Iraq," in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 956(a)(1). Amawi, El-Hindi and Wassim I. Mazloun are also charged with conspiring, together and with others, to provide material support to terrorists, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 2339A. Amawi is charged, individually, with two counts of making verbal threats against the President of the United States, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 871. All of those offenses were charged in the original indictment, however, Zubair and Khaleel Ahmed have been added as defendants in the first conspiracy charge, Count One of the superseding indictment.

A new charge against Amawi in the superseding indictment is an additional count of distributing information regarding explosives, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 842 (p)(2)(A), relative to a manual on manufacturing explosive chemicals downloaded from the internet onto a computer disc and provided to another individual for use in training others, in February 2005; (Amawi faces a separate Section 842 (p)(2)(A) charge carried over from the original indictment involving the distribution of a suicide bomb vest video).

New charges against El-Hindi in the superseding indictment include two counts of distributing information regarding the manufacture and use of explosives, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 842 (p)(2)(A), and a single count of making and using a false writing or document, a violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1001 (a)(3), regarding a false document he prepared and provided to the Lucas Metropolitan Housing Authority in February 2004. El-Hindi is charged, jointly with Zaim, in a separate, seven-count indictment, with fraud-related offenses relative to the use of federal grant funds the two received in 2002. The indictment charges El-Hindi and Zaim with conspiring to commit the offenses of theft of public funds, making false statements, and wire fraud, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 371. According to that indictment, El-Hindi and Zaim applied for and obtained a grant from the Internal Revenue Service, administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, in the name of "Educational Social Foundation Services, Inc., (ESFS)" which they falsely represented to be a charitable, non-profit corporation. The grant, in the

amount of \$40,000, was awarded to ESFS from the Low Income Taxpayer Clinic (LITC) Program for the purpose of providing tax-related services, including the operation of tax clinics in Michigan and Ohio. The indictment alleges that El-Hindi and Zaim diverted nearly all of the grant funds to their personal uses, and that no tax clinics were ever operated by ESFS. The two are also charged with theft of public funds, a violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 641, and five separate counts of wire fraud, violations of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1343, relative to the grant fraud activity.

Bilal Mazloun is charged in a separate indictment with making a false statement to federal agents in February 2006, a violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1001 (a)(2). The indictment alleges that Mazloun was interviewed by federal agents at the time his brother, Wassim I. Mazloun, was arrested on the original indictment. During that interview, Mazloun claimed to be unaware of any of his brother's training activities, including practicing shooting firearms. The indictment alleges that Bilal actually participated in one of the April 2005 firearms training sessions with his brother and Amawi.

If convicted, each defendant's sentence will be determined by the Court after review of factors unique to this case, including the defendant's prior criminal record, if any, the defendant's role in the offense and the characteristics of the violation. In all cases, the sentence will not exceed the statutory maximum and, in most cases, it will be less than the maximum.

The maximum statutory penalties upon conviction for the offenses charged in the three indictments are as follows:

18 U.S.C. § 956(a)(1): 35 years imprisonment (if conspiracy to maim) or life imprisonment (if conspiracy to kill);

18 U.S.C. § 2339A: 15 years imprisonment;

18 U.S.C. § 842(p)(2)(A): 20 years imprisonment (each offense);

18 U.S.C. § 871: 5 years imprisonment (each offense);

18 U.S.C. § 1001(a)(3): 5 years imprisonment;

18 U.S.C. § 371: 5 years imprisonment;

18 U.S.C. § 641: 5 years imprisonment;

18 U.S.C. § 1343: 10 years imprisonment (each offense); and

18 U.S.C. § 1001(a)(2): 8 years imprisonment (if related to international terrorism).

In addition, a \$250,000 fine could be imposed for each offense of conviction, as well as a period of supervised release, of up to 3 years or up to 5 years, depending on the offense, following imprisonment.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Thomas E. Getz, of the National Security Unit of the United States Attorney's Office, and Gregg N. Sofer of the Department of Justice, Counterterrorism Section, following an investigation by the

Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Joint Terrorism Task Force in Toledo, Ohio, and with the assistance of the United States Secret Service; The United States Treasury Department, including the Internal Revenue Service and The Inspector General for Tax Administration; and the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Inspector General. Mr. White also thanked the United States Attorney's offices in Chicago and Detroit for their assistance in this case.

An indictment is only a charge and is not evidence of guilt. A defendant is entitled to a fair trial in which it will be the government's burden to prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.